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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA SUPPORTS U.S. PROPOSAL ON FMCT NEGOTIATIONS

REF: STATE 92033

This message is sensitive but unclassified.

¶1. (SBU) Political Unit Chief and PolOff delivered reftel points on June 13 to Alexander Kmentt, Austrian MFA Director for Nuclear Nonproliferation. Kmentt assured us that Austria places an absolute priority on getting FMCT negotiations moving as soon as possible (the position the country has held since 1995, he added). He said Austria welcomed the U.S. proposal for a negotiating mandate at the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Austria, along with most of the EU member states, could accept it as is - with the caveat that all issues, including verification, would have to be on the table.

¶2. (SBU) Speaking as the current chair of the EU Working Group on Nonproliferation, Kmentt reiterated European opposition to linkages with non-germane issues. However, Kmentt said the EU would not oppose a "package" whereby FMCT negotiations could occur in parallel with discussions in ad hoc committees on other CD business, if that would help move things off dead center. On verification, Kmentt indicated that the EU would welcome alternative, innovative ways of ensuring compliance not considered in the USG 2004 inter-agency report.

¶3. (SBU) Kmentt said Austria and the EU are most interested in the outcome of US consultations with China and Russia and thought their positions would be decisive. Kmentt also raised a concern with the U.S. India civil nuclear energy initiative. He asked whether India would be able to support the draft U.S. framework absent a verification system. Traditionally, he noted, India favors universal and nondiscriminatory verification for confidence-building - especially with regard to China and Pakistan.

McCaw